

MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP: Urban Design Committee

DATE, TIME AND

PLACE OF MEETING:

Wednesday, February 25, 2004, 3:00 p.m., Mayor's Conference Room, County-City Building, 1st Floor, 555 South 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska

MEMBERS AND OTHERS

IN ATTENDANCE:

Members: Michael Eckert, JoAnne Kissel, Dennis Scheer, Gordon Scholz (departed at 4:24 p.m.), Scott Sullivan, and Kim Todd (arrived at 3:15 p.m.). Third World Oforah absent.

Others: Trevor Hull (Erickson Sullivan Architects); Michael Bott (Michael Bott & Assoc.); David Livingston, Debby Brehm, John Decker (Douglas Theatres); Dallas McGee, Jeff Cole (Urban Development); Ed Zimmer, Michele Abendroth (Planning Department)

STATED PURPOSE

OF THE MEETING:

Regular Meeting of the Urban Design Committee

Mr. Scheer called the meeting to order at 3:07 p.m.

Approval of Meeting Notes February 4, 2004

Mr. Eckert moved approval of the February 4, 2004 meeting minutes, seconded by Ms. Kissel. Eckert, Kissel, Scheer, Scholz, and Sullivan voting 'yes'; Oforah and Todd absent.

Recommendation on Sidewalk Cafe, Starbucks, 12th and P Streets

Jeff Cole stated that the sidewalk committee met yesterday and approved the Starbucks plan pending the relocation of the newspaper box locations. He noted that it is an interesting design; there is no access to the outside dining from the building, but there are five openings in the fence. Mr. Sullivan commented that he would like to see a more decorative railing instead of utilitarian; all members in attendance agreed with him.

Mr. Sullivan moved approval pending a revised railing design. Mr. Zimmer suggested that because of time considerations, a revised design be brought to him for his review. The motion was seconded by Mr. Eckert. Eckert, Kissel, Scheer, Scholz, and Sullivan voting 'yes'; Oforah and Todd absent.

Design update and review, Douglas Grand Theatre and Block 41 Streetscape (Urban Development Department)

Dallas McGee updated the members on the plan. Last July, the conceptual plans were brought to the Commission, and the plan was approved. A number of meetings have been held on how to take it from the conceptual plan to the design development level. Since then, Douglas Theatres asked them to consider some additional changes.

Kim Todd arrived at 3:15 p.m.

Mr. Sullivan stated that there were changes made during design development which they felt did not compromise the design approved by the Commission. Compared to the original drawing, the windows above the entrance on the O Street side were eliminated; the updated design has an awning system which created enough interest so the windows were unnecessary. The facades of the alley were originally brick but have been changed to a tilt-up panel in order to attain some cost savings. The lighting in the alley originally had more ornamentation, but is now a light more typical of what you would typically see in a service area. The aluminum panels were changed to a beige porcelain tile. Lastly, the lighting on the awnings was reduced.

Michael Bott then reviewed additional *considered* changes in order to stay within the budget. Considered changes on O Street included the removal of the eyebrows, changing the corner monuments from copper to granite, changing the raised planters to in-ground planters, removing two of the four vertical signs. On P Street, considered changes included the removal of the eyebrows, reducing the height of the corner monuments by three feet, eliminating the top row of windows, changing the monuments to black granite instead of copper, lowering the brick wall at the recess portion. On 11th Street, considered changes were to reduce the corner monuments by three feet, changing the corner monuments to black granite, and changing the raised planters to in-ground planters. On 12th Street, changes considered were to reduce the corner monuments by three feet, changing the corner monuments to black granite, changing the end flat roof to canvas awnings, and removing the square window above the exit.

Mr. Eckert asked if the P St. facade had been reduced in height. Mr. Sullivan stated that it has been reduced by approximately six feet.

Mr. Bott reviewed the *proposed* changes. Along O Street, the raised planters have been changed to in-ground planters. The benches under the windows will remain. Two of the vertical signs have been removed, with two remaining on the ends of the building. Mr. Bott noted that the original eyebrows hang over the sidewalk, and are very expensive as they are painted, galvanized steel, so they are proposing to remove those. On the west elevation, essentially the only change is changing the raised planters to in-ground planters. On the north elevation, they are proposing to remove one panel from above the window, removing the eyebrows, and reducing the two tile features by 18 inches. On 12th Street, the corner monument is proposed to be reduced in height, and the raised planters will be changed to in-ground planters.

Mr. Scholz stated he feels that the signs are an important entryway to O Street and that the effort put into giving this liveliness is critically important to the project. Visually he feels it is important to have a wall of interest. Mr. Eckert stated that his perspective is that the signs are important to that facade. Mr. Scheer stated that the signage is one of the most important items to keep as well as the planters.

Ms. Kissel asked who is responsible for the maintenance of the planting beds. Mr. Livingston responded that the issue has not been resolved. Mr. Scheer asked what the original intent of the planters was. Mr. Sullivan replied that they were faced with a wall that is very blank, and it was thought that this would create some interest and life. Another issue was to break up the facade. Also, it provided an opportunity for benches. Mr. Scheer stated that raised planters are difficult to maintain. His opinion is that the raised planters don't occur anywhere else in downtown, and suggested removing the planters that are next to the building altogether. However, he feels that the benches are needed.

With respect to the eyebrows, Mr. Scholz noted that he feels the eyebrows add a great deal of visual interest and feels strongly that they remain. Ms. Kissel asked if they looked at changing the eyebrows to

create some cost savings but would leave some of the whimsy.

Mr. Scholz departed at 4:24 p.m.

Mr. Scheer stated that he feels the eyebrows are an important design element to the building. He feels that the conceptual element of the building is critical, and it is important to explore other options for the eyebrows. Ms. Todd noted that you will never see this elevation because of the overstory trees, but added that you would see the eyebrows as a pedestrian. Mr. Scheer stated that the eyebrows are particularly important to him as he feels the O Street facade does not cater to the pedestrian, and they add visual interest for the pedestrian.

Mr. Livingston commented that he is hearing mixed messages in that everyone agrees this building should look like a theater, but he does not know of another theater that has eyebrows. Mr. Zimmer suggested possibly adding some lighting at the top to illuminate the copper. Ms. Brehm stated that they felt it was important to keep the copper, but felt the eyebrows could be removed as they weren't as integral to the design. Mr. Livingston reminded the Commission that this project is significantly over budget. Mr. Decker added that even with the proposed changes, it still does not bring the cost back to the original budget.

On 11th Street, the members felt that removing the planters was the best solution. Mr. Sullivan commented that if the planters are removed, there is the issue of the awnings being over nothing and the issue of how the building meets the sidewalk.

On P Street, Mr. Eckert felt that it was important to have the same eyebrow treatment on both sides. Mr. Scheer stated that he feels the eyebrows could be removed on P Street but not on O Street. He noted that his priority is to rethink the eyebrows on P and O Streets.

Mr. Zimmer summarized the Commission's collective responses to the proposed changes, as follows: the Commission feels that the planters should be removed, the four vertical signs should remain, and other options should be looked at for the eyebrows.

Update on Enersen Urban Design Award

Mr. Zimmer stated that he will contact the members in regard to the Enersen Award.

Staff Report/Miscellaneous

There was no discussion on this agenda item.

Upcoming items: schedule Enersen Award tour

No discussion took place on this item.

Mr. Scheer adjourned the meeting at 5:23 p.m.